Revised Autopsy Report On Jackson Is Released

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SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Sept. 21—A revised autopsy report released here today reveals that San Quentin inmate George Jackson was shot in the middle of the back and not in the head as authorities first reported.

The second autopsy report, completed Sept. 7 and released today by Marin County pathologist John Manwaring, exactly reversed the path of the guard's bullet that killed Jackson as he allegedly sprinted for a prison wall in an escape attempt on Aug. 21.

The fatal bullet, according to the revised autopsy report, struck Jackson in the middle of his back, broke three ribs and coursed up his spine, crashing through his brain and exiting at the top of the skull.

In his first report, made the day after the incident, Dr. Manwaring concluded that Jackson suffered "a gunshot wound in the head with a fracture of the skull."

The revisions appear to conform with some versions of the incident as reported by surviving prisoners who talked with their attorneys a week after the alleged escape attmept.

After Jackson's attorney, John Thorne, heard of the autopsy revisions, the San Jose lawyer once again pressed for a public investigation.

"It is interesting to see the subtle changes in the official prison version as the facts change," said Thorne. "By the time we get the full facts the prison officials will still be coming out with new variations to make the original story stick. I hope this new information will make it absolutely clear that an independent investigation must proceed at once."

Jackson's family and other prisoners in the San Quentin Adjustment Center have insisted all along that the 29-year-old author and prison revolutionary was "set up and murdered" in the Aug. 21 incident in which three prison guards and two other prisoners were killed.

When Jackson's mother, Mrs. Georgia Jackson, first viewed her son's body she said Jackson had been shot in the back and the head and charged that her son's face had been beaten beyond recognition.

"I could only recognize his hands and his nose," she said at the time.

Despite the revised autopsy report, San Quentin authorities today basically stuck to their report that Jackson was shot by an officer from a gun tower. Officials said Jackson was first hit in the foot and knocked down and was fatally shot when he got up and started running.

"According to our reports," said San Quentin Warden Louis Nelson, "Jackson was struck by a bullet fragment and was knocked down and he got up and was running in a crouched, bent-over position."

Nelson said Jackson ran out of the prison adjustment center with a pistol in his hand, firing shots at guards in a tower and on a gun railing overlooking the prison courtyard.

Jackson, Nelson said, "was trying to shoot down that guard on the railing so he would have a clear shot over the wall. The officer on the wall dropped down on his belly and fired."

Another guard in a tower at the opposite end of the courtyard also began firing and Jackson was caught in a crossfire, according to prison officials.

Nelson said that once Jackson began running in a crouch, "it sure as hell would be possible" for a bullet fired by the guard on the gun railing to hit Jackson in the back and exit out the top of his skull.

Other officials, however, were cautious about the angle of fire.

Manwaring himself was on vacation today when the report was released, but Marin County coroner Donovan O. Cooke said Manwaring revised his conclusions after consulting with ballistics experts.

The coroner added that he did not know who those ballistics experts were and ballistics reports on the incident still are not available to the press.

Marin County deputy coroner E. R. Fontaine, who examined Jackson's body immediately after the incident and said then that he was "satisfied" that Jackson was shot from a tower while on the run, was also more cautious today.

Fontaine carefully noted that "once they hit, bullets can alter course depending on where they strike, particularly if they strike bones."

Manwaring indicated in his report that he was hampered by the fact that he could not examine the clothing of the victim.

When shot, Jackson was wearing prison denims, high-top prison shoes, a blue woolen jacket and a green cloth belt. Critics of the prison version have wondered how Jackson could have gained access to the jacket and belt since such jackets are not prison issue to either inmates or guards and belts are not provided to maximum security prisoners like Jackson.